

# The Oval

---

Volume 10 | Issue 1

Article 15

---

4-15-2017

## The Grateful Shed

Brad Lambert

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

## Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

---

### Recommended Citation

Lambert, Brad (2017) "The Grateful Shed," *The Oval*: Vol. 10 : Iss. 1 , Article 15.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval/vol10/iss1/15>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Oval by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

## THE GRATEFUL SHED

BRAD LAMBERT

Thanksgiving Day, 2016

here are the railroad tracks, cross them,  
and there is the Yellowstone County line.

although the sign reads NO TRESPASSING,  
the barbed wire beckons with fingers curled.

waiting for trains to pass,  
to paw at the West,  
feet treading on sandstone,  
printing animal tracks  
into untouched snow,  
*en route* to the Shed.

O' what a haven I know.

but if this is the meadow,  
where is the grass?  
here is the sandstone  
tufted with sage.  
burnt sage.  
where is the fire?  
who burnt the sage, the sage?  
who burnt the grass, blasted the stone?  
what of the Shed?  
where is my lean-to?

charred wood,  
a mockery gleaming in the sun,  
rusted nails and combusted sandstone.

the washboard basin is no longer empty,  
the basin now filled with the soot of the roof  
stands alone in the shimmering black,  
the greatest of places, forsaken  
lean-to, is burnt to the ground.

O' what a haven I knew.

from my points of low being  
from the valley it drew me  
past the railway tracks,  
across summertime meadows,  
past sunbathing rattlesnake packs.

from the valley it called me,  
from my manic heart's heaving  
to the blizzardous humming  
of wind whistling through walls,  
snowfall drumming  
on the corrugated rooftop.

O' here stood a haven I knew.

here was the shack room door  
scratched with the words  
THE GRATEFUL SHED.

here was the open front,  
the range's mouth  
where I'd stare into the valley  
with the envious eyes of rivers  
long since dried, of sandstone  
long since eroded.

here was the place  
abuzz with stone hornets,  
hundreds of whispered ideas.

here was the prairie  
where I shall first pray, then breathe.  
where I shall first write, then breathe.

here is the shack, ungraciously fallen,  
where I buried my head so gratefully,  
dug for all that I never deserved,  
all that I never received.

O' here lies a haven I knew.

sage: that's for remembrance.  
sandstone: that's erosion, not forgetfulness.  
shed: that's where the true cowboys go to sleep, write,  
where their ghosts drink whiskey  
with me and myself, alone at night.  
where we perfect the art of self-talking,  
consider synonyms for never-letting-go  
where gritback Montanan shepherds go to rest  
with myself on the basin, drinking from dust.